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LUNARIA SAXIFRAGE.

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OR,

TEMPER AND TRIUMPH.

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BY THE AUTHOR OF

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LUNARIA SAXIFRAGE;

OR

TEMPER AND TRIUMPH.

CHAPTER I.

BIRTH AND CHILDHOOD OF LUNARIA.

"WELL, Nurse," said Squire Saxifrage, "what news? How's your lady?"

"Very low, Sir; you have a little daughter, a beautiful little baby, but its mother is, we fear, sinking fast."

The Squire, who loved his wife next to his day's sport, hunters, and a good glass of old port wine, started up, and hurried to his wife's bedroom, where the stillness felt to him insupportably painful, and as foreboding some calamity. "Ella, dear love, are you so very ill?" he said, tenderly stooping over her, and kissing her brow, clammy cold with the dew of death. She could not answer; she looked a look of recognition, but he had come too late! She died—she never saw her child. Her husband wept, looked sad, and for a couple of weeks stayed at home, sending for his baby every day after dinner, when he pleased Nurse by admiring her charge, and sighed, as he remembered

"Ella," and how grieved she was when her first-born, her son Edward, died.

Dewsbury Castle, the home of our heroine, was all that could be desired, and as the little Lunaria was carried by Nurse in the splendid park, and laid on a warm rug, under the shelter of the noble oak trees, soothed to sleep by the cawing in the rookery behind the venerable and magnificent ivy-covered Castle, many ideas of grandeur and splendour for her nursing passed through the mind of the old woman.

The christening was attended by all the neighbouring gentry, and the child grew up, in every sense of the word, a spoiled heiress. Her father admired her, and spoke of her beauty and talents, before her. The servants idolized her, and she rode to admiration by the age of ten, and was a good shot by twelve. She had a clever tutor, with whom she learned from attachment, but, poor child ! her will was a law, and woe be to any who contradicted her. Being much in the open air, she was healthy, so she was not cross-tempered ; she had a bright, kind smile and soft word for all, but fits of passion, if thwarted in the merest trifles, destroyed the beauty, alike of body and mind. She was a lovely girl, and had she been judiciously reared, few could have equalled her in loveliness of disposition. Her father laughed, when her dark eye kindled with rage, and her proud pouting lips gave expression to words she had learned from himself. Poor

Lunaria ! she was as wild and as untamed as the Arab colt ; yet, as even it, when caught, subdued and domesticated, has a warm, loving, grateful heart ; we hope, yet, something better for our heroine than to grow up like the wild heather of the moors. Once or twice she had suffered so acutely after her fits of rage, that even Nature taught her to subdue her temper a little. A pet bird would not drink when Lunaria held the crystal fount to its mouth ; angry, she seized the little warbler, and too rudely making it immerse its head in the water, it gasped, and closing its bright eyes died in her hand. How she wept ! how she hated herself ! she could not be comforted ; she would not eat, and refused to see even her tutor, but sat all the evening on a low seat, sobbing, and with her little favourite clasped to her breast, fell asleep, and softening tears bedewed her pillow. Again, a peasant child displeased her, and she struck the little offender ; the child sickened and died, and, although her blow in no way injured the child, Lunaria could not forgive herself, and for months the sight of the dying child smote her heart continually. She could not own her fault, seek forgiveness, and enjoy sweet peace of mind ; pride ruled over her, and yet daily she carried fruit, flowers, and every luxury to the peasant's child ; but when the little invalid thanked her, Lunaria felt self-reproach, and she could not pardon her own sin. She knew little of what is

called religion ; she repeated her prayers and her catechism, all perfectly. She went to the parish church once every Sunday, and as she increased in beauty every year, she was not displeased at the gaze of admiration as she seated herself in the family pew, the sole representative of the ancient house of Dewsbury. She loved her father, but could not respect him, and yet she had a warm affection for her horses, dogs, and old favourite servants, and last, though not least, her tutor. She was as happy as her nature would allow her. She had no anxious fears, no hours of sickness, little sorrow ; she had no wish ungratified : naturally clever, she liked her lessons, and, as she was never allowed to study but when she wished, her books and tutor were alike a recreation and companionship. She rarely got angry with her teachers, as " Knowledge is power." She felt gratitude and respect for those who knew more than herself, and, as her young governess sang some plaintive airs, Lunaria, ashamed of such womanly weakness, would turn away to conceal the tears that would flow from these dark (but too often angry) eyes. Thus passed our heroine's childhood, but she attached herself to none. Her mind was too masculine, and yet her soft, sweet voice bespoke the flood of tenderness within—pent up by an invulnerable pride.

CHAPTER II.

EDUCATION AND BETROTHMENT.

HER father's associates were not of a character to influence his child—elderly men, sportsmen, like himself. She was admired by them in the hunting-field, as a first-rate huntress, a daughter worthy of such a father! Lunaria was no more gratified by their approbation than if they praised her horse or hounds; having no rival, she knew no vanity, and having been flattered from infancy, it all fell harmless. How different from the child of poverty and adoption, unloved and never admired; its childhood blighted by coldness and constant fault-finding; its eyes dimmed with unshed tears; its little heart withered in the bud! How the first voice of sympathy wins the heart, and the first word of love enchants, e'en enslaves the soul! Ah! that parents—above all, mothers or female guardians,—knew the misery that follows such coldness on their part. An unmeaning word of flattery, a kiss, given from self-gratification, wins the orphan maiden's heart, and unites her for life to one totally unworthy of her. In the same way, our heart bleeds for the young milliner, shop-girl, and domestic servant, placed to earn their bread in the

LUNARIA SAXIFRAGE.

most chilling and selfish atmosphere, where their finely-moulded form and girlish beauty is but regarded as a piece of machinery, and a cold calculation made of how much labour it can endure. The home-reared maiden of our British Isles basking in the loving smiles of her parents; accustomed to the caresses of little brothers and sisters; used to the honied, harmless flattery of "Bonnie Nelly," "Pawky Lassie," "Our braw Bairn"—ah! to them the soft words of seductive blandishment fall unheeded, no blush of pleasure mounts to the cheek of the happy girl, her heart is filled, and only true worth and genuine attachment can find a welcome in that maiden's heart or in her father's home; but, unfortunately, few can afford to keep at home their grown-up daughters, and the hard-worked mothers have not studied their characters or prepared them for coming trials. They are pure-minded themselves, these excellent, but ignorant women, and they send their young daughters to the edge of the headlong steep, without an arm outstretched to save, or a voice of warning to protect them; and if their foot slips, and they fall, how bitter, how unforgiving are these parents! The unhappy girl is driven to despair, sometimes tempted to destroy herself, or, what is more common, finding herself homeless, she resigns herself to a life of infamy, and an early grave. Who would have thought nineteen summers back, as she lay nestling in her mother's

bosom, that for want of the prodigal's welcome she was thus lost!

We must return to Lunaria. Her father had, by reckless extravagance and horse-racing, run through his means, involved his estate, and although of a character rarely to look forward, still he wished Lunaria to marry well and soon. So, he invited many young men, and even young noblemen of wealth and respectability, and soon was charmed to betroth his daughter to Lord Ellerton, a jovial, fine young fellow, who loved his sport, his glass, and had no objections to a spirited and handsome wife.

CHAPTER III.

MARRIAGE BROKEN OFF—FALL IN HUNTING—ILLNESS
—KIND COUSIN.

LUNARIA and he never knew one day of peace ; they quarrelled fearfully, but laughed and smiled immediately afterwards. April showers and sunshine ! Her father felt sometimes a little nervous, as he feared Harry's love would not stand this long ; but as he had never taught his child one moment's self-control, she could not, even to gain a coronet, act the hypocrite. So, one day Harry Ellerton had irritated her beyond endurance, and her favourite spaniel resting its petted head upon the young Earl, he kicked it, and it howled and ran to its mistress. She, in a passion, reproached him violently, and as he smiled at her passion, she struck him. He rose, bowed, and left Dewsbury for ever, wrote to her father, saying he could not marry a young tigress, however lovely ; and renounced the engagement. This had no effect upon Lunaria, except that her father grew colder to her, and lectured her upon the necessity of appearing more gentle and ladylike. She answered haughtily, and left her parent's presence ere a burst of passionate reproach assailed him.

The Castle was full of strangers, chiefly sports-

men, and Lunaria appeared in the hunting-field, angry with all the world, because the only one she loved was dissatisfied with her ; she was reckless, she rode more fearlessly than usual, took leaps not even the most daring ventured upon, and was finally thrown, and lay senseless. Her father's agony was intense, he felt as a dagger every word he had said to his child ! ! all he had on earth. He raved, he cursed, he tore his hair, but could do nothing. Gently she was raised by stranger hands, gently water bathed her insensible brow, and a flask of brandy was put to her pallid lips ; but no returning consciousness followed. She was carried to the Castle by several of the young men, and sad was the return. Her horse, led by the groom, felt he was in disgrace, and drooped his proud neck, and slow and faltering was his step. The father, trembling, leaned upon a friend's arm, and seemed too much grieved to speak. The old Nurse wrung her hands, and beckoned to the young men to carry their precious burden to her chamber. How gay it seemed !—her birds singing, her flowers blooming, the cheerful fire, and elegance of her apartment, all now seemed a mockery. Her little Italian greyhound saw in the mournful faces of all, that there was cause for grief ; a low whine, and the little creature stood aloof and watched his kind mistress being laid upon her luxuriant couch, as unconscious, and meanwhile as lifeless, as the marble statues which surrounded her : for Lunaria, with all her faults and irregular

course of education, loved the fine arts ; her room was filled with paintings by the first masters. "Cuyt" with his charming moonlight skies, and also his warm sunny atmosphere ; "Both" with his tall trees, rich in light, and varied foliage, with the sun's rays gilding the tufts of leaves and plants, and enhancing the charms of the scene. Some fine "Claudes," in which you gaze with admiration at the colossal ruins of the ancient temples ; also his fine Italian sea-ports, under the aspect of a glowing sunset. Being fond of horses and hunting, a few of "Wouvermans'," representing animated scenes and hunters mounted on their spirited horses. Guido's "Penitent Magdalen," Teniers' "Flight into Egypt," Greuze's lovely "Female Mourner," Raffaele's "Holy Group," so full of sweet expression, and opposite her couch is Greuze's "Domestic Felicity," which so happily expresses the sentiment of affection and pleasure, and many others.

But Lunaria is hovering between life and death, her cousin, an eminent barrister, had arrived some days before at the Castle, but she had been in too bad a humour to do more than receive him with even more than her usual hauteur. Young Saxifrage rode merely as a gentleman ; he had devoted his whole time to his profession, and had distinguished himself through life. He was an earnest student, had rarely spent an hour for his own amusement, and been but little in the society of ladies ; his family were consumptive, had all died, except his

mother, and for her he thus toiled that she might be proud of her son. She noticed lately he had a slight cough, imperceptible but to the quick anxious ear of a mother, and she urged him to accept his uncle's invitations, given in every letter, to come and get strong at Dewsbury. His calm judgment and gentle manner had done all for his cousin. He now left her to be undressed, and rode one of the swiftest hunters for a good surgeon, for he feared Lunaria had received concussion of the brain. Many hours of intense anxiety for the watchers, ere Edmund returned with an experienced and skilful surgeon. After examination, and using means which by slow degrees restored consciousness, the surgeon was of opinion that the fall had been broken by the ribs coming in contact with a mass of stones; several were broken, but this had saved from injury the vital organs of the head. Recovery was now hopefully anticipated, but the moans of the poor girl showed how very much she suffered. Opiates were given to produce sleep and ease from pain, and the surgeon remained for several days, till the fractured bones reunited. In a few weeks all danger was past, but quiet and rest of mind were absolutely essential. The Squire returned to his usual avocations in excellent spirits, that all was right with his beautiful daughter, and for her it was left to endure the weary hours of weakness and languor, doubly bitter to an amazon like our heroine.

CHAPTER IV.

CONVALESCENCE, GRATITUDE, AND LOVE.

THERE was one who had never left her, but to snatch a few hours of sleep, and as she could bear no other arm to lift her, no other voice could soothe her. He alone could administer the drugs. He alone, by a kind but determined manner, controlled the restless irritability of fever,—Edmund had been the gentle nurse, and as he now sat at a little table near her bed, his high pale brow resting on his white hand, and the clustering soft brown curls straying wantonly over his cheek and fingers,

“Do you weary, dear cousin?” he said, approaching Lunaria, her dark eyes filled with tears.

“No; but I was thinking how nobly you have acted, and how you must despise me.”

“No, dear Lunaria, I have acted towards you as my heart dictated, and I am more than repaid by seeing the rose return to your cheek. But,” said the generous young man, (as her dark eyes again filled to overflowing,) “I must resume my authority of nurse, and forbid all exciting conversation.”

“But Edmund, will you forgive me all?”

“Yes, dear!” and he kissed her little hand.

“And will you advise me how to lead a different life for the future?—You often thought I was asleep when you prayed at my bedside, and asked blessings for me; and will you do so now, and often? and when able I will tell you my faults, my fearful temper, my pride, my rebellious spirit when differed from, my impatient, unloving, and selfish nature.”

“Dear cousin, what a catalogue!” as the girl seemed relieved when all was out. “Unloving! no my cousin, how could you delight in such a scene as that, if your own heart did not echo the sentiment?” and Edmund pointed to the “Grenze,” on which so often he had seen her eyes rest with pleasure,—a cottage scene of love and joy at the return of an affectionate father.

“You have faults, my dear cousin, who has not? but you are responsible for great talent, fine tastes, and many admirable qualities. You are young, and can far more than redeem the past. You have a vigour of mind and powers of mind that rightly directed will make you a *great* woman; and if by prayer and effort on your own part to subdue all that is evil, you succeed, you will be a good woman;” and Edmund ventured to look up at his cousin, half afraid how her pride would stand this test, so severe even to the humble, of hearing their faults. Her countenance was truly that of repose, beaming with dignity and loveliness, and mingled with penitence and devotion. Edmund knelt

beside his cousin, her hand in his, and prayed. He then, in his own low musical voice, (which had so often lulled her to sleep,) read some Psalms, and kissing her now untroubled brow, arranged her pillows, gave her a little nourishment, and went to write to his mother while she slept. His letter will express his sentiments better than by narrating them.

“MY DEAR MOTHER,—Having sent you a bulletin daily of my cousin’s health, you will be glad to hear she is to have a bit of chicken to-day, and to be upon her sofa, and to walk once or twice through the room. She is a dear girl, when one knows her; her very expression alters to those she loves. I thought my two first days at Dewsbury purgatory; but I saw her to disadvantage, she was vexed, and then this sad accident; but the three months passed at her bedside seem but a week—we are so happy!!! She is very clever, a strong masculine mind, you almost forget she is a woman, till her soft voice, and a feeling that thrills through me, remind me she is beautiful as well as gifted. Her faults are all those of education; what a miracle that she is so ladylike, so refined, and so accomplished. She owes much, indeed everything, to her teachers. My uncle is the soul of honour: he told me last night he is a ruined man, deeply involved, and at his death will not be worth a farthing; that this was his reason for urging his daughter to marry the wild

young earl. She has of her mother's money £5,000 on her marriage day, and from him nothing. I saw his motive for telling me: he saw that I was deeply interested in my cousin, and he feared I wished the family estate. He is a gentleman in every sense of the word, and I love my poor uncle; but grieve to see him wasting life in hunting, horse-racing, and drinking. I grieve to say he rarely goes to bed sober; no constitution can long stand it. He says I have saved Lunaria's life; so, as soon as she recovers, (if you consent,) my own dear mother, I will ask her hand from her father, and bring you a daughter with a mind as beautiful as her face and figure. She is lovely and amiable. My cough is better, and my spirits quite light. I only need my angel-mother with us to be quite happy.

“Your affectionate son,

“EDMUND SAXIFRAGE.

“P.S.—I know you disapprove of cousins marrying, but you will not make any objection. We are in love, so cannot hear reason, dearest of mothers.—E. S.

“P.S.—Again—Lunaria is asleep, or would say something to you. Yesterday she said, ‘How I love our mother!’”

CHAPTER V.

MARRIAGE—THE CONTINENT—BIRTH AND DEATH OF
CHILDREN—ILLNESS AND DEATH OF HUSBAND.

THANKS to her healthy training, having run wild like a young colt for many years, our heroine regained her health and strength with great rapidity, and enjoyed a drive with her cousin Edmund in the pony carriage. Six months of suffering and weakness had altered Lunaria entirely, she had grown into a gentle, loving woman; and when grieved, and her face flushes with passion, she now controls herself; and although for a time the conflict raged within, and pained her better judgment, thanks to Edmund, who ruled her by love, she knew where to seek for guidance, and the Spirit's help, which alone gives enduring peace. Thus it was not Edmund on whom she had learned to rest; he knew better; he taught her to rest on the Rock that never fails! whose support endureth for ever.

To please the Squire, there was a grand wedding; and a carriage-and-four bore the *really* happy pair to the Lakes of Cumberland, and then they went to Italy, as Edmund's doctor had advised this for him; but first they visited Edmund's mother, a

real English lady, still beautiful, in the autumn of her life, with a heart so kind, that Lunaria, who had never known a mother's kiss, or seen a mother's smile, clung to her, and shed, along with Edmund, soft, sweet tears, on her mother's bosom. Would that there were more mothers-in-law like Edmund's gentle mother. How much more happiness would be in store for us all! Why do mothers-in-law and their sons' wives so seldom agree? The "love" is wanting.

Lunaria and Edmund spent one happy year abroad, basking in sunshine, and in each other's love. A little boy was welcomed, and its fond mother scarcely knew an ailment. She nursed and loved her boy; named him Edmund the Second; but ere long he sickened and died. Another, and it, too, died; and fancying the climate of Italy was too relaxing, ere her third was born she hastened home, and presented to grandmamma, in her sweet English cottage, a little rosebud, a sweet girl, called "Ella," after Lunaria's mother. It, too, sickened and died. Cousins' children are rarely clever or healthy: these sweet, winning, precious buds were early and in mercy called hence. Their parents mourned and wept; but better thus, than to see them grow up weak in mind, or debilitated in body, enduring a life of suffering, and a living grief to all who love them.

Edmund's mother died in her daughter's arms, and she was comforted by Edmund. How he ad-

mired his wife ! She had been tried in the furnace of affliction and was purified. Her character was loveliness itself ! But a heavier grief yet awaited her. Edmund's health now became so alarmingly bad that his wife never left his side day or night ; and she was summoned to Dewsbury Castle if she wished to see her father in life—a fit of apoplexy, and little or no hope of his recovery. Truly our heroine was in the deep waters, but she never broke down ; the Arm she had sought years before, the Rock on which she leaned, now sustained her, and she was sustained, and enabled to bear all. Her parent died, and left her his blessing ; he had no more. She was so paralyzed with grief she never shed a tear ! All her little ones, their grand-mamma, her own father, and now her cousin Edmund, her husband !—Alas ! alas ! she could not weep ; as long as she could toil, lift him, give him ease, read to him, pray for him, think of him, and HOPE he might be spared—she lived *in him* ! Each pain he felt, so did she, even more acutely ; each restless night she shared, till, at last, she could not sleep : her head swam ; she knew nothing but to murmur soft words of comfort in his dying ears, to hold his hand, to pray, low, soft, sweet prayers for him. And all is over ! Edmund, her husband, died ! Her chest heaved more than his ; what agony ! Verily she tasted death !—

CHAPTER VI.

LUNARIA A CHILDLESS WIDOW—HER PLANS FOR THE
FUTURE—A NIGHT OF WEEPING FOLLOWED BY A
DAY OF USEFULNESS.

ALL is now over! the days of intense mental pain, and nights of starting sleeplessness—waking with words of kindness and comfort on the lips, when your loved one is not there to hear it—the agony of the last day and hours beside the coffin—the farewell—the sound of the hearse, and the suffering of seeing him borne away by unfeeling hirelings. Weeks passed of suffocating, sickening sorrow. But the faithful in adversity, the good “Veronica,” never left her mistress. She had been under-nurse to the sweet babes, and was devotedly attached to her mistress. She was niece to Lunaria’s nurse, and had been trained to love the heiress of Dewsbury—so, like the sweet flower whose name she bore, she clung to her in her adversity.

For some months Lunaria could not look forward; but, as returning health and energy were granted, she durst not bury her talents in the earth, and bethought herself of her path of duty

After consideration and prayer she summoned their family doctor.

"And now, dear sir, you remember a promise you made me of recommending me as a sick nurse." The doctor looked distressed.

"Surely, my dear madam, this is not required."

"Ah! no, Doctor," said she, seeing the mistake; "I am rich in money, but have no ties, no home duties, and I should pine to death; I cannot live for myself, or alone. I wish to be a Sister of Charity, but to live in England, and try to be of use to the poor, in hospitals, almshouses, and in cases where you think I could be useful to help to nurse the poor of my own class, who find hired nurses so expensive, or so unfeeling. It is for this I claim the fulfilment of your promise."

"It is," said the doctor, "an arduous undertaking, but admirable."

The doctor, a clear-headed practical man, stated to her all the annoyances and discomforts she must meet with: "the difference of nursing from attachment, and from a sense of benevolence and duty;" and having prepared her for the worst, told her he thought "her resolve a noble one, and he knew no lady of refinement and education so well suited for a nurse."

"And, Doctor, you will meet me at the Infirmary, and introduce me in my new character?"

"I will; we understand each other. There is a ward of convalescents will suit you for a begin-

ning. They are too weak to read, many too ignorant, and the hours hang so heavy you will be very welcome."

"Agreed," said Lunaria; "my best thanks for your kind help. I hope to be of some comfort to other sufferers;" and she sadly smiled, and pressed the doctor's hand.

"But, dear Lady, you are so far from the town, and all abodes of poverty."

"I will easily arrange that; my faithful 'Veronica' will not be induced to leave me. I intend having no home, but taking up my quarters at an hotel, near my work, where my maid, my dog, my birds, and many precious memorials of my loved ones, may be my solace in the quiet evenings, after my day has been spent in usefulness."

The doctor was overcome.

"What a vigorous mind, after such years of trial! Most ladies would selfishly indulge their grief, or strive to forget it by mingling in scenes of amusement and gaiety."

"But, Doctor, I am a working animal, and could not bear the hours of self-reproach if I wasted my still young life in uselessness."

The doctor saw her mind was made up, so with a hearty "God bless you, dear Lady, and prosper you in this good work," he left her.

This was the most sad and lonely night Lunaria ever had; her mis-spent life rose up against her; her father's sad and reckless manner of living,

then her infants' dying, and her husband's sufferings—how religion alone enabled him to bear the constitutional irritability over which he grieved, as his poor wife suffered from it. She felt as though riveted to that bedside, to suffer over again the closing scene. She sees the dear one's cheek crimson from hectic fever—the cough, the rapid pulse, the failing strength, the bright, but sunken eyes. She can endure it no longer; it is the last night in her home, and her strong mind is overpowered by her love and woman's tenderness! also years of suffering had shaken her own strength more than she was aware of. She knelt in prayer, and pouring out her sorrows as well as sins to Him who alone can absolve, she felt relieved. She then pleaded with our Heavenly Advocate to be washed from all her past errors, and to give her the Comforter she so much required. She prayed for guidance to act aright henceforward, and that the holy angels would be with her, a homeless wanderer, a bereaved widow. A low sob burst from her agonized heart, and Veronica, who was in the next room, heard it; and as she reached her mistress, she found nature had been too long tried, and she had fainted. It was morning. Lunaria had spent the last night under her own roof, in prayers and penitence. Her kind maid, by applying warmth and cordials, revived her, and having put her to bed, soothed her beloved mistress to sleep.

Veronica had been adopted in childhood to tend the flowers and feed the birds of the young heiress ; it was a proud day for the faithful young girl, when she was advanced to be under-nurse to the infant Saxifrage. How fondly she nursed these lovely, precious babes ! how bitterly she wept when they suffered and died ! and to-night she had cried herself to sleep ; and resting on her pillow were the pictures of her nurslings—the fair-haired blue-eyed “Edmund ;” “Henry,” with his mother’s dark eyes, but the transparent delicacy and consumptive look of the father ; and the lovely little “Ella,” whose unnatural brilliancy of eye, narrow chest, and long slender fingers, marked this dear little one, as well as her brothers, as an early victim to the hereditary disease of her family. At the appointed hour our heroine met the doctor at the Infirmary, none could have guessed her night of suffering ; except that she was very pale, but calm, and had not her lip slightly quivered, not even the doctor could judge of the inward struggle. She gave her bonnet and cloak to Veronica, and followed the doctor, her basket on her arm, filled with any picture, toy, or books she thought would amuse. The doctor introduced her to the nurses, as “a kind lady who wished to sit with the sick for a little, to read or chat to them ;” and our heroine took refuge beside a very young man, who seemed recovering from some severe ailment—so pale, so worn, so depressed.

"You have been very ill?" said she, in her own peculiarly low soft voice, and soon she forgot all but "Tom Millar." He had been a neglected child, and had run away from a drunken father and harsh stepmother, and been an unhappy cabin boy; the only face he had any warm remembrance of, was a kind lady, who, in crossing the Channel, remembered him, and gave a soft kind look, and a little book, when she put a sixpence into his hand. And so he did not fear Lunaria, but was comforted by her kind sympathy. Nurse declared, "Tom was a new man."

In the next bed was a sort of idiot; he could not say even a prayer, and yet seemed so willing to hear, so grateful to get his sad murmurs spoken; this was a case of duty, so he was patiently heard, and a child's toy given with a kind word and a few ozenges. The next was an aged saint; how sweet to hear his pious breathings, his resignation to die soon, his faith in what his Saviour had done, his willingness to leave all in God's hands! Our heroine felt it a privilege to listen to him, promised to listen to him again soon, and giving him a few shillings to purchase any little luxury he wished, pressed his hand, and turned to another,—a young man who, Lunaria saw, could not long be in this world. He had lost a leg some months ago, and consumption had begun in his system: the flushed cheek, hard cough, and expectoration,—alas! this was an interesting and but too familiar

case to her, she spoke so gently, and her eyes filled with tears; the invalid, accustomed to be looked upon as a "case," was surprised, and she asked, if he had long been ill, and gently drew from him his story, spoke comfortably to him, and on his saying he intended going out, as he was pronounced "incurable," Lunaria marked down his address, gave him some cough lozenges, and some black currant jelly, and said "she would come to see him and his wife and baby soon, in his own home. He was Scotch, he could not say a word of thanks, but as she took his emaciated hand, he pressed it for an instant, and tried to speak; a painful cough followed, and "Willy's" eyes never ceased to follow her, till she left the ward. It was six o'clock, and she felt tired, and found her faithful maid at the exact hour, with her bonnet and cloak, waiting to escort her (not home but) to her hotel, where Lunaria retired early to rest, and slept more soundly than for many months. She arose, refreshed, with her mind filled with her patients, and Veronica remarked her dear lady's step was firmer, and she seemed less sad, since she began to work. We are created to be of use to others, and it is a fact, that, next to being wicked, to be IDLE is the most unhappy lot. Our heroine to-day asked for the woman's ward, and a surly nurse came forward. Lunaria paid her no attention; and soon was so engrossed with a sweet child suffering from scrofula, that she forgot

nurse's bad temper. Poor body, she poured some boiling water over her hand, and her moans brought Mrs. Saxifrage to her side, who promptly applied wadding and warmth, and the crabbed body felt relieved, and said as the lady left, "They are not quite useless these lady-nurses after all, but the gentry should keep their own places." Many coarse taunts were uttered by the nurses, who feared Lunaria was a "spy," to see that they did not rob the sick of their nourishment and wine. But soon they saw the lady-nurse never interfered with them, but soothed the suffering, and allowed them time to sleep in their chair, or gossip, as they liked; they found her useful, and soon welcomed her good-humouredly.

CHAPTER VII.

LUNARIA ACTING AS SICK NURSE, OR SISTER OF CHARITY ; ALSO A VISITOR IN THE ALMS-HOUSE FOR SOME YEARS.

MRS. SAXIFRAGE, by which name our heroine was now well known, had passed two years in the Infirmary, and been as happy as in her sad lonely state she could be ; she often followed the convalescents when they left the Infirmary so weak they were unfit to work, and the change from the good diet, good nursing, and quiet rest, to their noisy, comfortless homes, with no fire and little food, was to the kind lady heart-striking. What a pity, she often thought, that a fund could not be raised for this purpose—that an allowance per week should be given to the poor patients till their health was sufficiently renewed to enable them to resume work. Here her faithful Veronica was invaluable ; she followed her mistress's footsteps, and daily visited certain houses with just the proportion of nourishment and wine for the day, for how sad it is the want of economy or provident care among the very poor ; also the prevailing disease of intemperance, that robs the

very couch of the sick husband or wife, even steals the clothing of the family to satisfy the cravings of the drunkard ; but in the Alms Houses much annoyance awaited our heroine : she saw the poor paupers suffering from cold and insufficient clothing, and joyfully she promised many comforts to them, and Veronica and she arrived the next day laden with good things ; but the matron would not permit them to be given, and hard was the trial to our heroine's temper as she heard the refusal seconded by the governor ; had she yielded to her temper, in a passion, she would have left the house for ever, but she felt so acutely for the distress of the poor, they doubly required her to console them, so she told Veronica to take the warm clothing to some of her other poor friends, and saying to the matron her reasons were good, although her position of being obliged to be so strict was painful—calm, and somewhat saddened, she had to explain to the disappointed poor and sick that she dared not act against the rules of the House. Their patience in so bitter a trial was a silent rebuke to Lunaria : she gave all that was permitted, a little tea, or jelly, or a trifle of money ; and how her presence was hailed, she was the light of the poor-house, the sunbeam of their hearts ! She listened, and pitied each one, and whenever it was practicable alleviated their sufferings. There were two sweet children she soon loved, both were the victims of their fathers' intemperance—

sweet Maggies ! lovely angels ! a few months and they were safely housed in Paradise. Sometimes as the eldest slept, Lunaria gazed at her calm, placid expression, so guileless, she knew no sin but the original evil ; and the blood of Christ, in which she trusted, had washed her "whiter than snow ;" when she woke, a sweet, pleased smile rewarded "Mrs. Saxy," as the children called her, and a toy, a few beads, or a doll, charmed the sweet sufferers—they slept next to each other, and dearly they loved each other ! many an hour Mrs. Saxy sat between their tiny beds, telling them "of little Samuel being called," of our Saviour loving little children, and taking them in His arms and blessing them. She then taught the eldest a little prayer, and told her to teach it to "wee Maggie." (These children were Scotch.) Then giving them some cooling fruit, or tempting cake, with a kind "good night," she left her rosebuds. Sometimes she visited the insane, and although rather nervous she knew there was a wide field here for usefulness, yet it required years of training and moral courage, so she generally gave a present of a cheerful musical instrument, or a fine soothing picture ; also toys for the idiots, and money to add to the comfort of the sick. To some she became attached ; and all loved and respected Mrs. Saxifrage. The blind knew her step, and delighted in the music of her voice : and as she read to them on certain days of

the week, they crowded round her, and blessed her. These hours of working usefulness were happiness to our heroine, her heart was in another world with all she loved, and now the children of affliction were her family, and her maternal bosom was the resting-place of the sad, sick, or sorrowful. Many a penitent Magdalene, who was hardened and silent when the matron (a good, but narrow-minded, bigoted Christian) lectured them upon being humbled, wept tears of real genuine repentance upon Lunaria's bosom, as often she lingered till midnight, as they poured forth their story of sin and sorrow, and she pointed out to them the Saviour who died for sinners, and who rejected none. "Come unto me,"—often these comforting words were the last heard by the dying penitents. So totally did Lunaria live for others, so deeply interested in their happiness, or rather in striving to alleviate the miseries of others, that for twelve hours she forgot to take food, and fell down between the poor-house and her hotel in a fainting fit. Poor Veronica blamed herself, and ever afterwards, if her mistress did not return, she was in attendance at the hour with proper nourishment for her dear lady. Who could have thought the change produced by sanctified affliction upon the heiress of Dewsbury, "forgetfulness of self" was now the most lovely trait in her character? The health of our heroine was beginning to suffer from the long

hours of confinement in the poor-house ; and Veronica, seeing her Lady's food often went away untasted, proposed to her a day or two of perfect rest, and fresh pure air. So she agreed to be lazy for a little, and was lying on the sofa reading an Italian poem, when her good friend and doctor walked in.

CHAPTER VIII.

AN UNEXPECTED REQUEST THROUGH HER DOCTOR TO
VISIT A LADY OF RANK—THE SUFFERINGS OF THE
RICH.

"GLAD to see you taking a little rest ; but ah !" said he, "you do not look as well as I wish, and I fear to present my petition, lest it should injure you."

"What is it?" said Lunaria, starting up, "I am well, only my good Veronica was not pleased with my appetite. There is nothing I wish more earnestly than ever to be useful. Doctor, I like my work."

The doctor, as usual when with this superior creature, had to pause and clear his throat.

"It is, dear Lady, the saddest case I ever have known in all my practice, and you alone are capable of assisting me."

Lunaria's dark eyes beamed with joy ; then drooping her proud form, she murmured, "O God, help me and make me useful and humble." She looked up, her eyes full of tears.

The doctor continued, "She is a lady of about *thirty*, and married not many years ago the hand-

some, wealthy, and dashing Lord Ellerton. She was the daughter of a peer, and so lovely, she was often mobbed in London, and theatres or public places were crowded, merely to see her; she was vain and proud, and reared by a worldly-minded mother, who, as the ill-natured world said, (or I would rather call it the disappointed fortune-hunting mothers said,) caught the young earl. Well, they were married, and during a few weeks all went on well; but soon his selfishness and idle conduct annoyed his lovely petted bride, and her exacting demands upon his attentions he would not be troubled with; this caused little quarrels, pouts, and sneers, and the young couple became fashionably indifferent; rarely met, except in society, as neither had much heart, or knew the meaning of true love. Their mutual indifference was in their circle a matter of course, the tenor of their lives went on smoothly, each allowed the other to follow the bent of their own inclinations; and it was only at times that Lady Ellerton felt keenly the utter heartlessness and misery of such a life. When her little daughter was born, and its father away from home, when weak and depressed, she asked nurse 'if his lordship had returned,' and she hesitated, and at last said, 'he had hastily dressed for dinner, and went out on hearing that Lady Ellerton was asleep.'

" 'And did he see baby?'

" 'No, my Lady.' These were trials, my dear
D

Mrs. Saxifrage, but we cannot change a character such as Henry Ellerton's, by even so important an event as the birth of his first-born. A few years and he was the father of twin sons, and, strange to say, neither parents cared about the unfortunate children. The lovely mother was so fond of admiration, she seldom saw her children, felt it quite a punishment when they were unwell at any time ; and during my visit she was from courtesy obliged to be with us for a little. I looked at her, as a lovely picture, but would have preferred it upon canvas, to free the soul from responsibility. She had no *love*, no fondness, but for self. She delighted in adorning her symmetrical form, and never was satisfied unless she was the acknowledged belle of the season, and sometimes piqued her husband into paying her outward attention to prevent others from doing so. Sometimes she coquetted so as to enrage Lord Ellerton, and the home scenes were shocking !! But to do justice to the lovely wife, she had no attachment on earth, she had never seen or known any feeling but vanity !! A French governess, from six years old, had taught her to coquette, her parents deceived each other and the world ; they were struggling to keep up a position of rank and importance, and were ruined : her father by gambling ; her mother, a thorough woman of the world, who sold her child to the best bidder. Her two other daughters were also victims. One died of a broken heart,

from her husband's neglect, as she had an affectionate nature ; the other has habits which degrade the lowest of her sex ; but all was owing to the mother's neglect and bad example.

" But I tire you," said the Doctor, " only to do good you must know all, and yet I fear you will hardly venture to go to London after hearing all this. To finish my long story. Caroline and her lord and master had a violent quarrel, and as he had been drinking pretty freely, he was very abusive, his wife hurriedly and very angrily left the room, and by accident struck her cheek against the edge of the door a very severe blow. In a few days I was sent for, as I knew the constitution of her family, and she also had the best advice in London ; but never again will that lovely face be admired, never again will it resume its hue of health ; for long it gave no great uneasiness, but to get it *well*, so as to allow the poor lady to return to her scenes of gaiety, alas ! we found it impossible. We could not tell her. I told her mother the fatal truth ; she expressed her regret just as if it were a stranger, indeed seemed to feel the world hearing of it as far more painful than her daughter's sufferings. I literally loathed that woman, my heart bled for Lady Ellerton, and I passed a sleepless night and wept for her, till, like the sun's rays piercing through thick darkness, dear Mrs. Saxifrage, I thought of you. But if it is too much mental

anxiety, do not go, for I see your own health has already suffered."

"No, not much, my kind friend; but is there no hope? surely it is not that most dreadful of all diseases—cancer."

"We have every reason to believe so. It is owing to an hereditary disposition, and a few months will likely terminate her sufferings. She already has hectic fever; but her mind is in such an unhappy state, and to me it is intolerable agony how to answer her daily question, 'When shall my poor face be well?'"

"Dear me," said the Doctor, "it is past eleven o'clock. I have kept you up all night."

"And the children, are they alone?"

"Yes," said the Doctor, "the girl Kennedia is not nearly so beautiful as her mother, but has great talent and energy of character, and although she has been left to the mercy of servants, yet a sensible day governess whom I recommended, has, I trust, been of great use to her. The baby boys are now four years old, and one is lame from an accident; the servant would never own how it happened. He is a cold still child, having suffered unpitied, and never known a mother's love. The other, Hubert, is a most engaging boy, but self-willed and violent; kicks and strikes all around him. His father is proud of his beauty, but cares not for the other two. You will like Kennedia, she has

the mother's splendid eyes and winning smile, but a larger head and finely-developed brow, and the little *nez retroussé*, which indicates talent, combined with internal strength. She is a dear child, and, if well trained, she must become a noble woman. I am glad she is not like her mother."

"My mind is made up," said Lunaria, "and when shall we go? for you must introduce your nurse."

"I must be off by the express train at ten tomorrow, but you will require time to pack."

"Not at all; I can get anything in London, and my faithful Veronica will follow me in a few days and live near me."

"Thanks and blessings, dear Lady: what a relief to my mind! Poor Lady Caroline, she will have one friend to the end!"

CHAPTER IX.

ARRIVAL AT HYDE PARK—SPLENDID MISERY—STARVATION AMIDST PLENTY—DIAMONDS AND TEARS.

By an early hour our heroine was ready. Her rich widow's dress, braided ebon locks and snowy border, well became the almost stern beauty of that countenance ; and as her gentle maid assisted her mistress, and said—

“Dear Lady, you are like yourself to-day,” and ever and anon wiping her eyes. “And when shall we follow you ? You will be so tired to-night, and no one to assist you ;” and the faithful, warm-hearted girl burst into tears.

“Veronica, Veronica ! you quite spoil me, and make a child of your old lady.”

So saying, she clasped to her heart her weeping maid, and calling “Coming ! ready !” as the punctual doctor entered.

It was late in the afternoon when they arrived at Hyde Park, and Lunaria had told the doctor that she could not see Lord Ellerton, and must be called “Nurse,” or “Sister Ella ;” “that was my mother's name, and Harry does not know it. I must leave the room ere he enters.”

“*Dear Lady*, I will remember you are ‘Sister

Ella,' and Lord Ellerton rarely visits that room, except when sent for; and, poor, lady, only once she asked him, when her sister was troublesome, and she wished to get her away."

They reached the handsome park and the doctor said—

"I think it best to introduce you to-night, at once, and then you will have at your hotel one good night's rest ere you begin your work."

Our heroine trembled, as the door-bell rang, and she feared to meet her former lover. The doctor pressed her arm kindly, and whispered—

"Courage, dear Lady; for her sake bear up! Once to see her, you will feel what true 'philanthropy' is! You have a noble spirit. Will you remain in this room, till I go and tell her of our arrival?"

Lunaria seated herself on a couch in the small but luxurious room; indeed, everything in the house told of the wealth of the inhabitants. Mirrors, velvet curtains, and ornaments, reminded Lunaria of "home." She was glancing at the Book of Beauty, as it lay on the table open, when her friend appeared.

"She is quite charmed to see you but thinks she will not long require a nurse. Poor lady, it is sad to hear her."

They entered the invalid's room, and so courteously she said—

"I feel it so good of you to come and help to

spend my time in this dull sick room. I know we shall soon be friends. 'Sister Ella' is as beautiful as her name. Doctor, you did not tell me of her beauty, although Sister Ella's good qualities have been much spoken of;" and so, gracefully, she took Lunaria's hand, and asked her to be seated beside her bed. "I am weak and lazy to-day, but shall soon be well. Doctor, shall I not?"

"If my wishes, dear Lady, would cure you, you would not suffer one moment. But now shall I leave you, or shall I take 'Sister Ella' to her hotel for this night, and she will return to-morrow, if you invite her?"

"Oh, no!" said the spoilt Beauty. "She will stay. You will not leave me. I like you already, and you shall have a comfortable room all to yourself, and my maid will wait upon you till your own comes. You will not refuse me. Doctor, speak for me; persuade her to remain."

"With pleasure I will stay," said the unselfish Lunaria. "I will remain this evening, and for a few nights, if you wish me."

The doctor looked his grateful thanks, and pressing Lunaria's hand, said, "God bless and reward you," bowed to Lady Ellerton, and said—

"At what hour shall I meet Dr. — to-morrow?"

"At twelve."

The kind doctor said, "Good-by," and left the two ladies.

Lady Caroline summoned her maid to show the lady to her room, and ordered refreshment. Lunaria soon returned, and found Lady Ellerton restless and excited.

"Come and talk to me. Oh! how I tire now with this horrid sore face. Look at it, and you can tell me daily if it gets better. And how came you to be so kind as come to nurse me? Are you tired of the world already; so young and so attractive?"

She chatted on, partly from curiosity, partly from feverishness. Lunaria seated herself near her, and told her about her husband's death, and her sweet children, and that having no near relations, she felt less unhappy when of use to others, than sitting grieving alone.

"True," said Lady Caroline. "How tired I am! Can you make my pillows better? Put your hand there. Now give me that medicine, and read a little bit of Byron's 'Corsair,' and, perhaps, I may sleep."

Lunaria did all she asked, and in two hours the lady slept. The night nurse came in, and whispered to the "Sister" that—"My lady would sleep for the night, and she had better retire." So Lunaria went to bed, hungry and tired, and did not like to ring for tea at that late hour. She left her dress, everything, lying on the sofa, and after commending herself, Lady Caroline, and all in the house, to God, she fell sound asleep. She heard a

gentle tap at her door very early. About four she rose, and nurse said—

Her Lady was not so well, and wanted her to come. “She wishes you to see her face dressed, and it is always more uneasy when she awakes.”

So Lunaria hurried on her dressing-gown of black wadded silk, a large Indian shawl, and putting her feet into her fur-lined sleepers, did not cause a moment’s unnecessary delay. Her sweet voice had an immediate effect in calming the hysteric fit of the poor lady. The nurse had been cross at being awoke so early, and the sweet kind voice of Lunaria fell as balm on her ruffled aggrieved temper and spirit. “Sister” Ella supported her in her arms, rested her flushed cheek on her kindly breast, and asked if she had had any nourishment since she awoke. She then rang for the maid, and ordered what was best, and told the nurse she was not required, as she had had a long sleep and would need no more. The poor face was dressed, and Lady Ellerton lay calmly till the nurse left, then she felt the blessing of sympathy, and poured out her griefs with childish eagerness, how “Nurse was so rough, and how difficult it was to waken her.” Well did Lunaria know the truth of it all, and to a Peeress’s grandchild to suffer from the temper and selfishness of a menial!! How bitter! Lunaria *felt* for her, and kindly telling her nurse was ignorant and beneath her *notice*, *changed* the subject.

“ You must, dear Sister Ella, see my jewels, they are most beautiful. Lilene, bring my jewel case ; it will amuse us.”

Lunaria sighed, but cheerfully took them from the sulky maid, who seemed afraid the lady-nurse would appropriate some of them.

“ Your Ladyship will not require your maid when I am here ; she may go to bed, n'est-ce pas ? ”

“ Yes, Lilene, you may go till we ring ; ” and the ladies were left alone. After admiring the ornaments, and hearing of the balls, and parties and conquests ; the last all new to our heroine, who had never been seen in public ; the lady was exhausted, and tears dropped upon the pearls and diamonds, as her strength gave way, and her face pained her. She looked up, and Lunaria's tears fell fast. “ Sister Ella, you weep for me, what an angel's heart you have ; dear sister, I love you, I never felt love before ! surely it means ‘ sympathetic affection. ’ ” She twined her arms around Lunaria, and “ begged her never to leave her.”

Lady Caroline fell asleep in Lunaria's arms, and poor Mrs. Saxifrage felt the torture of hunger, and nearly lost consciousness as her head drooped on the soft richly-adorned pillows beside her. Gently she laid her Lady down, and went to the table where she thankfully took some cold tea and bread Lady Caroline had left. She then felt refreshed, and wrapping herself in a large fur cloak she had brought with her, she prayed for Lady Caroline

and for herself, and, on a sofa near her, fell into a troubled sleep. It was far on in the day ere the poor lady awoke, so fretful, so unhappy. Lunaria's eyes were pained with unshed tears. After she was ready to see her doctors her mother called, and Sister Ella hurried away to get refreshed and dressed, and she came in as the loud haughty tone said—

“ I must go ; we must secure a box early, as the house will be crowded. How are the children ? Sad pity that lameness of Henry's spoils him for ever.”

Lunaria saw the tall figure of the handsomely attired unfeeling monster, as she left the room, kissing her hand to her sick and tortured child. She could not restrain her feelings. “ Never mind, dearest, these words mean nothing ; she has never known sorrow or sickness, and does not intend to wound.” She comforted her, and telling her how much her doctor felt for her, Lady Caroline (who was a grown-up baby) was soothed and pleased.

The doctors came : one, cold and unfeeling, prescribed additional opiates, and left without leaving one drop of comfort behind. Lunaria's friend, after the consultation, returned and said, “ You were ill, dear Lady, through the night you had got chilled during sleep, and been too long without nourishment ; I fear the night nurse is not what she should be, we will dismiss her.

“ Oh,” said Sister Ella, “ Veronica would come *and be so attentive and useful.*”

"What a sweet name! is that your maid: is she a good one?"

"I think so," said Lunaria, blushing; "she is kind, truthful, and trustworthy."

"Then Veronica we must have," said the impulsive young creature. "When can she be here?"

"In two days. I will write without delay."

The doctor gave some professional advice and left them, promising to call early next day, or in the evening if he could. A few days passed in this way, no improvement in the face, but much in the comfort of the patient. Lunaria took her for a little drive, and the exercise made her sleep, and helped to pass more easily the hours of suffering. Veronica was soon a great favourite, her manner was so calm and gentle, yet every look expressed sympathy, and a respectful feeling; yet so tenderly touched the lady, never shaking the sick room or by noise agitating the nervous invalid; she or her mistress never now left the Lady Ellerton.

CHAPTER X.

SIX MONTHS' RESIDENCE OF OUR HEROINE AND HER
MAID WITH THE RICH—THE LITTLE ELLERTONS—
HAPPY CHANGE IN THE HEART OF LADY ELLERTON
—RECONCILIATION OF MOTHER AND CHILDREN.

"How can you bear to sit here day after day so contentedly, Sister Ella?" said Lady Caroline.

"It is the will of my heavenly Father, and also my pleasure. I could not now be happy away from you, during illness."

"And how did you get this calm, contented disposition?"

"Through suffering."

"And I am sure I suffer," said the poor lady ;
"and I grow more irritable every day."

"So would I, of myself."

"How then can I be less so?"

"By asking God's help."

"How?"

"In prayer."

"No one ever taught me. I do not remember any but the Lord's Prayer."

Gentle Lunaria sank on her knees beside her bed, and said first, the Lord's Prayer, then a little *prayer* Edward first taught her, and then rose,

kissed Lady Ellerton, and sat beside her, bathing her face and hands with rose-water, to refresh her.

“Read to me, Sister Ella, something that made you good, for I feel sadly miserable, and my face is so long in getting better ;—sometimes I fear it will never be well ;—and what will become of me? Did your husband and children fear to die, Sister?”

“No ; he had for long made his happiness secure. His mansion was ready for him, and he loved his Saviour, and even wished to go to Him?”

“Is that possible? how could he love one he never saw?”

“For what He had done for him. He gave His life to save *him*, and you, dear Lady Caroline, and me. You remember I read the story to you a few evenings ago?”

“Oh yes! and how he wept at the grave of Lazarus, and raised him up. A beautiful story. I wish he would cure me. Perhaps the air of Richmond may do me good. I care for nothing but to get there quickly. I am so tired of London ; I hate it!”

“Well, my Edward felt that longing to be in a bright, happy, loving world, free from weakness and pain. He felt for this world as you now do for London.”

“But how could he care to leave everybody and go to an unknown place? It is unnatural.”

"We can never of ourselves feel as he did ; but God, who created the world by a miracle, can in like manner change our hearts, and if we pray earnestly and strive to act as God approves, He makes us like his Word, Himself, his Son, and his Blessed Spirit, and then we gradually like his home—Heaven ! I will read to you what a beautiful home it is ; and no illness there ! All is love and kindness ; nay, it even says—'God himself shall wipe away all tears from our eyes.'"

Lunaria then read aloud the last chapter of Revelation, and Lady Caroline did not speak for some time. She thought she slept ; and the doctor was announced. Lunaria put her finger to her lip as he entered. He whispered softly, "Could you leave Veronica here for a little, and come to the nursery ? Henry is unwell, and so irritable ; none can please him, not even his kind little sister.

"I am awake, Doctor, and am glad to see you. Oh yes, dear Ella ! Poor child, he has his own griefs. Veronica will stay beside me ; and, Doctor, you will take Sister Ella among the little rebels."

Confusion reigned in the nursery. Toys strewed over the floor—and not one whole—a handsome noisy boy, the image of his father, rode on a hobby-horse, striking it most unmercifully, shouting "Tally-ho ! boys !" as loud as he could roar. *Harry lay on a little bed, as pale as the sheet,*

and so fretful and prematurely old and anxious a face, its expression so unlovely—destroyed features that were faultless, even exquisitely beautiful. His brow never seemed to unbend; and when the doctor kindly said,—“My Lord, I have brought a kind lady to see you,” he answered so coldly, and his childish lip curled as he replied—“I want no one, Sir; I prefer being alone.”

So unloveable a child Lunaria had never seen; his little heart seemed frozen. She asked if the noise did not make his head ache, and he said,—“Yes, but Hubert will not be quiet!” So she went to the rebel, and lifted him down by force; no easy task: he fought, tore her cap, and kicked. But she laughed, and said for a punishment she must have a kiss; and at the good-humoured contest even Harry’s grave face relaxed into a smile, as Lunaria, with the now good-humoured Hubert on her knee, her torn cap on the head of the hobby-horse, sat down to tell a story to the two little fellows. Her dark eyes and lovely black hair, her cheeks glowing with the exertion of conquering Hubert, made her most winning to the children; and as she told them of her girlish pranks—how she could climb trees, row a boat and ride a pony—Hubert put his dimpled arms round her neck, and said, “Sister Ella was a first-rate fellow.” Then Lunaria told Henry of such a quiet cosy little room near hers, away from noise, where he could rest on a pretty sofa, and look out at the

park; and that Doctor Alyssum said, if he lay very still for a year, his lameness would be gone, and he would then run about as well as Hubert."

"Is that true?" said the boy fiercely, "for the nurses tell so many untruths, I never know what to believe."

"Quite true," said Lunaria, and her stern expression returned; this seemed to reassure the boy; but all laughed as Hubert pulled round Sister Ella's face, and looking bravely into her dark eyes, said with a childish tone of command, "Look kind and beautiful again."

Our heroine soon was the friend of the boys, and the hours spent with Sister Ella in Henry's little room were the happiest of their lives. "Come on my back, dear Henry, and keep your limbs quite straight, and they will gain strength," said Lunaria; and how pleased the little fellow was, so cheered with the prospect of running about again. His thin arms round Sister Ella, his weight was nothing; and she bore him so gently, and claimed a sweet kiss as her reward for being so good a pony.

Six months had passed between London and Richmond, but no improvement in Lady Ellerton's state of health; but in mind—there was a blessed change in her state of mind, she received the truth simply as a child, and loved it through her gratitude and affection for "Ella:" she "believed," and *was saved*; and one day, hearing Sister Ella

speaking at the door, trying to exclude Harry, she said, "Let him come in." She impulsively held out her thin white hand, and said, "Hubert, love poor mamma?" and taught by Sister Ella, he answered "Yes; mamma, any better?" Poor Lady, she burst into tears. "Not cry, dear mamma," said the little fellow, kissing and petting the hand, as he had often seen Lunaria do to Harry. "Hubert make no noise if allowed to stay with Sister Ella and hear a story."

"Yes, darling," said his mother, gazing at him through her tears; and Lunaria's heart beat almost to bursting, as she whispered a prayer of gratitude that God had blessed her teaching alike to mother and child.

The little girl had been from home for two months, but so intelligent and warm hearted, she loved her mother from Lunaria's description of her beauty, her gentleness, and her deep sorrow, and she had long prepared the child (who was quite a little woman from thinking so much alone) to be a comfort to her dying mother; for none now could tell how soon a violent hæmorrhage might, with faintings or fits, put an end to her sad life.

"Dear Lady Caroline, might the other children hear the story? it is a dull rainy night, and we shall be more cheerful together."

"Oh yes, if they can bear the darkness and sadness of this sick room."

Lunaria left Hubert, telling him, in a low voice,

to tell mamma about his dog and pony, and the little boy chattered so merrily, his poor mamma was quite in love with her boy, so noble, so beautiful; and "Do you ever say any little prayers?" asked the dying mother, for Heaven was now so *real* to her, she longed to feel a hope of welcoming these other members of her family.

"Yes, Sister Ella taught me this," and he knelt down, still holding his mother's hand, and prayed his sweet child's prayer, and "Pray God, bless our own dear mamma, and make her well." He rose, and his mamma said, "Hubert's mamma will never be well, but she is going to a happy home; will you come to me when you are an old man?"

"Oh! far sooner, if you wish, I will go with you."

At this moment, Lunaria entered with Henry in her arms, and Kennedia holding nervously by her dress.

"Here we are dear Lady; you see Henry is much better, he will soon walk firmly and well."

"Will he lie down beside mamma, while you read the story?" said Lady Caroline, her voice trembling with emotion, as she placed her hand on his silken curls, and said, "Who is he like, Ella?"

"Yourself; I fancied so," said the poor mother; "but you must be wiser than mamma, and do good to others, dear Harry."

"*Mother,*" said the boy, and a burst of pas-

sionate tears relieved the heart that all had thought so cold, and fearlessly he kissed her cheek, brow, and eyes, repeating, as in a dream, "My own sweet mother."

No eye was dry. Kennedia sobbing, hid her face close to her mother; and surrounded by her children, caressed by them, feeling that they loved her, felt for her, wept for her, it seemed to Caroline Ellerton a foretaste of Heaven. "My daughter! how you have grown a great girl, and Sister Ella says a good girl; avoid your mother's errors, abhor vanity, never be proud or vain when told of your beauty. Take warning by your poor mamma. Do not love self, or jewellery, or fine dresses. Love your God and your Saviour, and pray for the Holy Spirit's guidance. Try to make others happy, first your papa, if you can, and then your brothers. But if you live in pleasure, my children, you are dead while you live. Make use of your talents, live to God's glory, and you will be happier. I never knew real happiness during my life of gaiety; it never fills the heart, it is so selfish. Dear children, I grow weaker every day; in case I cannot speak so much again, do you forgive mamma neglecting you? and will you try to live so as to meet me in Heaven? God is good, for Jesus' sake, who died for us; He has pardoned all my sins, and living or dying, I am happy."

The children kissed her again and again; Henry *lingered fondly*, and seemed loath to leave his

newly-found treasure. He laid his little head on his mother's bosom, and nestled close to her. Lunaria saw that Lady Ellerton was exhausted, and promising the children to bring them back early to-morrow, carried Henry away, and Kennedy took Hubert's hand, and motioning to Veronica to go to mamma, they went to bed sadder, but their little hearts filled with love. Their mother's image now would for ever be enshrined within their hearts, and their characters softened and improved from that hour.

CHAPTER XI.

PARTING SCENE WITH ALL—DEATH OF LADY ELLERTON
—SISTER ELLA TAKES THE CHILDREN TO TRAVEL
FOR CHANGE OF AIR AND SCENE—TRIALS OF
VERONICA.

For several weeks all lessons were laid aside, and the children were much with their mother. All *felt*, though none spoke the agonizing truth, that soon she must leave them; they learned far more than by any other way—they learned to feel for another, to soothe, to comfort, to be of use. Kennedia was older than her brothers, for girls are, at that age further advanced than boys. What a gentle, sweet little hand-maiden she was, giving little fond attentions without being asked. Truly woman is born a “sick nurse;” even the little Hubert answered to the oft-repeated question, “What is the hour?” and the mild reply and sweet “Dear Mamma,” at the end, comforted the poor dying lady more than even the opiates administered.

“Sister Ella, I wish to see mamma and my sister, and Harry. I feel a little stronger, and my mind *would then be at rest.*”

Lunaria told Dr. Alyssum of the lady's wish, and within an hour, her mamma and sister were with her; and, supported by pillows, she spoke much to both "of the certainty of death and of the judgment day, imploring them to seek their Saviour and to ask forgiveness through His blood." She shook hands with them, and told them her dying wish was to make them promise to use their influence with Harry that "Sister Ella should be asked to remain with her children for some years, till their characters were formed and they were of an age to withstand temptation. They promised, and as Caroline wept and thanked them, a tear trembled in grandmamma's eyes, and the other poor creature sobbed aloud.

"Oh! Caroline, I would willingly change places with you, you are happy, and I am a lost miserable creature."

"No, no, not lost; Christ died for you. Pray: even the Lord's Prayer; say it every night, dear sister, and renounce all evil habits. I ask you on my death-bed, dear Helen,—say 'yes,' for you are of noble birth and will not tell a falsehood—dear sister, promise."

"I will, if I can; but my heart is empty, and I am lonely. I drink to forget my early love; my plighted vows to the only man I could have been happy to love, honour, and obey."

She wept aloud—"Let us pray;" and the poor lady, much agitated, prayed aloud for both; her last

prayer on earth ; ere her husband could be called all was over ; but the promise was given, and sealed by the sister's lips in one long, kind embrace.

Lunaria entered ; her friend was in a happy world ; all her sorrows over, and her pain ended. She kissed her cold brow, and closed the lovely eyes. How nobly she had striven to redeem her time, and worked for the souls of others even to the death !

Lord Ellerton entered hastily as Lunaria sat calmly beside the body of his much admired wife. The room was nearly dark ; his bloated figure and florid complexion had changed the handsome young man much. He stood far off, then approached the bed and touched the lovely little emaciated hand. The rings he had placed there ten years ago caught his eye ; he wept, then, prayerless and uncomforted, hurried away.

He never saw Lunaria : she was sick with grief for nearly a year. She had been the solace by night and by day of the dear departed. She had been a blessing to her and many dear to her, and no regret could she feel ; but pure love and sorrow sickened her kind and womanly heart.

Lunaria passed the next week with the children, often taking them to pray beside their dear mother's remains. They had no foolish fear of death, it was to them the sleep that lulls to Heaven. It was proposed by the father and grandmother that Sister Ella and their aunt should travel with them for a

few years, accompanied by attendants, as the children's health and spirits required change of air and scene. Also Harry's lameness was nearly gone, but he required the mineral waters of Germany to strengthen him, as he could not yet dispense with his crutches. Veronica was necessarily one of the party; she was much changed during her residence in London; but seeing her dear mistress had more duties and trials than strength, she never told till long after what she had suffered from the fearful jealousy and ill-will of the servants of Lady Ellerton—the taunts, the insults had hurt even her health, and the abuse of her Lady, whom, they called a low, designing woman, come to *rob* Lady Ellerton, and get favour so as to be remembered in her Ladyship's will. Then the flippant "Larkspur" made love to her, and although the simple girl discouraged him by studied coldness, this raised the envy of "Dwale," one of the housemaids, till poor Veronica would have been *obliged* to tell her Lady, but for the butler, an excellent, steady, middle-aged man; and good "Speedwell" stood up for her, and made her life just tolerable, protecting her alike from the over-attention of William Truffle, and Vetch, and Pilewort, and from the envy of Rose, Bella, Fanny, and half a dozen others. How charmed was Veronica to leave London; she loved the little Ellertons dearly, pitied Lady Helen, and was glad to travel once more to see new places and *scenes*. She watched her dear Lady's sad face as

they left the home of Lady Caroline—how truly and fondly she had loved her ! She clasped Henry to her heart, and prayed that she might be enabled to do her duty to her lovely and interesting charges.

CHAPTER XII.

TWO YEARS ON THE CONTINENT—HENRY'S PERFECT RESTORATION TO HEALTH—LADY HELEN'S HAPPINESS WITH, AND FRIENDSHIP FOR, "SISTER ELLA"—LUNARIA RETURNS TO HER SPHERE OF USEFULNESS—NURSES HER FRIEND THE DOCTOR—HENRY'S LETTER.

AND they travelled through England, Scotland, France, Germany, and stayed some time in the mild climate of Egypt; for five years they had no home, yet were very happy, the old nurse, Speedwell, and Veronica, attended to all, and if they remained long, good masters were engaged, and the children grew in wisdom as well as in health, and were all that could be desired. Aunt Helen had no children, and was rather particular and exacting; but this saved them from Lunaria's over indulgence, as she, having lost her own so early, looked upon all children as "angels," and could see no faults. Henry was a beautiful boy, eleven years old, when they returned to London; and their father having died, the twin brothers had immense wealth and beautiful estates, their sister Kennedia also had a fine fortune. Aunt *Helen's husband* was more than indifferent to her;

he gave her a handsome allowance and cared not for her; she had faithfully kept to her promise. Lunaria helped and cheered her through the suffering of abstinence, and, by God's grace, she was a different person; but on offering, with Christian humility, to return to her home, her husband let her understand he was happier without her, so she remained with the little Ellertons, who loved and respected "Dear Aunt Helen;" and Lunaria and Veronica left them all safe, healthy, and happy to return to do good to God's poor people. How the children wept! but "Sister Ella" promised to visit them often, every few weeks, and they were comforted. Ella found her heart very sore and empty without her children; but Lady Helen was talented, kind, and competent, so she felt her work was over, and others required her. She found her friend the doctor ill, and she rarely left him till quite out of danger. What interesting chats they had! He told her of all that had taken place since she left six years ago; she scarcely knew one in the poor-house, not one in the infirmary. Her doctor well, she recommenced her visits, and received weekly tidings of her children. This letter of Henry's speaks for itself:—

"DEAREST SISTER ELLA,

"How we cried for you, after prayers, and Aunt Helen as much as any of us. Hubert fought

fearfully with nurse, and would not sleep because she did not sing 'Sweet Home' as Veronica did. Kennedia dried her eyes first, and sobbing, said, 'What would Sister Ella say? let us do as she would wish, and dear Mamma. We all felt ashamed, and tried so to do right; Aunt Helen is very kind, and we have been at a day academy, and do not like the taunts of 'Your Lordship,' but when Hubert makes a funny face and droll answer, they cry, 'He is not such a lord after all,' and we get on famously. I am not popular, you know, dear Sister Ella, my *cold* manner—but we cannot alter our nature; I was so miserable as a baby; I cannot trust many, and love few. Write how you are; if you think of your twin boys and of dear, good Kennedia, and kind Aunt Helen. We all love her, but we see she misses you, as we all do, and Veronica. Hubert says his curls are spoiled, and his shirt never looks the right thing. Come *soon, soon*, dearest of sisters, to your fondly-attached children, and to your

"HENRY ELLERTON.

"P.S.—I shall soon be twelve. *Come*, for my birthday—no pleasure without Sister Ella.

"HENRY ELLERTON.

"P.S. again! I hate my long Latin lessons—open confession is good for the heart—I am cross over them.

"H. E."

How Sister Ella cherished these letters, written from the heart ; she would fain have gone back to her children, but self-indulgence was against her principles. So, she sighed, kissed the dear boy's letter, and set off cheerfully to the poor and sick.

CHAPTER XIII.

LUNARIA'S VISIT TO HER CHILDREN—KENNEDIA ASKS HER CONSENT TO HER MARRIAGE—LUNARIA AND AUNT HELEN FIND OUT THEY OUGHT TO HAVE BEEN SISTERS—REGINALD WENTWORTH ADOPTED AS ONE OF "SISTER LUNARIA'S SONS"—MARRIAGE OF KENNEDIA.

FIVE years passed, and her children were now young lads and lasses. Nine years since their mother died, and our heroine is no longer young. She approaches the autumn of her life. A few white hairs are mingled with her jetty locks ; and Hubert is angry with them, and pulls them out. But again they appear, and Sister Ella laughingly says, "They make her more respected." Her heart is young and warm, and the embraces of her little Ellertons, as she fancies them still children, make up to her for her life of toil and self-denial. And now Kennedia sits upon her knee, and hiding her blushing face on her bosom, tells her that "she loves a good young man, talented, and très comme il faut, not rich, being the younger son of a noble earl ; but as she has a large fortune, Aunt Helen thought she had every chance of happiness. *Aunt Helen thinks you will like Reginald.* Aunt

Helen approves, if you do, and Reginald is coming to-morrow to ask Sister Ella's consent, for he knows how deeply we are indebted to you, dear Sister Ella, and says we should be very wicked if ever we could forget all your devoted love and care."

Sister Ella promised to see Reginald often, and to give her candid opinion; but said she, gazing at the broad open brow, "I have little fear, for Kennedia has too much mental beauty to make a foolish choice."

So the happy little party were sitting chatting the evening before Aunt Ella was to leave, and Kennedia read in Aunt Ella's manner that her choice was approved of, so she said, archly—

"Aunt Ella, I am not jealous. I see Reginald is very fond of you. He wanted a chat with you alone, so we will leave you for a little."

And Aunt Ella gave her consent, and told Reginald of the treasure he would have in Kennedia. Much she said of advice; and Reginald thanked her, and promised to do all in his power to make the child of her affection happy. And Hubert looked in, and said—

"I am jealous. I cannot spare Sister Ella any longer. You have had time enough to arrange all our marriages. Who am I to have? I want a wild colt, such as Sister Ella once was."

"Ah, you rogue, you would be a rare pair," said Aunt Ella, caressing her dark-haired favourite, "You must tame yourself first, ere you undertake

the responsibility of another's happiness. And you, Henry, are very silent."

"Who would think," said Aunt Helen, looking with pride at Lord Ellerton, "that that handsome, straight-made young man would have been lame for life, but for Sister Ella?"

"Yes," said Henry, bending down fondly, and pressing his lips to Sister Ella's brow; "we owe you everything, our health and happiness here, our hopes of happiness hereafter."

"I must not take more credit than is due. For many years Kennedia is indebted to amiable Mrs. Cottsoot, her governess; and owes much to her instruction; her character was formed by her; and to her excellent training Kennedia owes many of her good qualities. But, dear friends, I must tell you a little of my early life; indeed all, and my real name, and I hope you will all love Lunaria Saxifrage as you do 'Sister Ella.'"

Mrs. Saxifrage told her story, and when it was ended, Aunt Helen tearfully embraced her, saying—

"You should have been my sister. You have, indeed, been more to me, and now 'Sister Lunaria' is, if possible, dearer than 'Sister Ella.'"

The good-night and good-by soon followed each other; and Lord Wentworth made Mrs. Saxifrage promise to return in six weeks to his marriage.

"Six months," said Kennedia.

"Six years," said Hubert. "Why not plague *the poor fellow* as much as possible?"

"Well, Sister Lunaria shall fix," said Kennedia.
"Do you agree, Reginald?"

"Yes, for I think she will not tease me or tax my patience."

"Agreed," said all.

And Sister Lunaria smiled, and said, "Aunt Helen must fix."

"Well," said Aunt Helen, "I shall miss my darling, but must imitate Sister Lunaria, and forget self, so we shall say, this day six weeks hence."

Reginald kissed his aunt, and thanked her, and then said—"I must be a child of Sister Lunaria's."

And she smiled, and kissed him, as she did her other children, and left them to return to her life of usefulness. She was each day so occupied with sick, afflicted, or dying, it was only in her prayers, morning and night, that she could remember her own beloved children; and when she told Veronica of their invitation to the wedding, Veronica feared her lady had forgotten to order a dress suitable to the occasion.

"Ah, no! I ordered a handsome dress for myself (my usual dress) of the deepest mourning; but I ordered a gay one for my maid; and, Veronica, are you sure you do not regret devoting your life to me? It is sad for one so young."

"No, dearest Lady, I love but yourself, and then the young Ellertons. I will never leave you."

"Dear, faithful girl, I admire and esteem you, as well as love you. You must be very smart, for *Hubert* says, 'None can curl his black hair but

Veronica;’ and the bride says, ‘Veronica must dress her;’ and Henry has a little present for ‘Veronica,’ of a writing-desk and dressing-case, to carry your treasures, and a little pocket-book, to mark down when we write, as, if we miss one day, he thinks something is wrong.”

Veronica’s dress was blue, and in her white cap and ribbons she looked charming. So thought the men-servants; but Veronica’s heart was more than filled, and she smiled to all good-humouredly, and cared for none of them.

And now the day was come, when the young Kennedia leaves her fond aunt, and affectionate brothers, and had bidden farewell to her governess, thanked her for her kind instructions, and asked her to accept five hundred pounds, as a mark of her esteem and gratitude. All her duties over, she is dressed by Veronica, and all have admired her, even the little scullery-maid gazed with wondering eyes and open mouth, at the lovely girl, arrayed in white satin, laces, her mother’s splendid diamonds, and orange blossoms. These trials over, Kennedia retires to her room, fastens the door, and prays to be guided aright, thinks of her beautiful mother, and *her* sad death, and weeps long and bitterly. Again she sinks upon her knees, and prays so earnestly, as to speak aloud, that she may be humble and mindful of death, never love money, or greatness, or beauty, but receive the gifts of *God as talents* committed to her trust, and do her *duty to all* around her. She then prayed very low

for her future husband, his parents, her own dear ones, and that Aunt Helen and Sister Lunaria might be long spared to advise them all. Then again for her twin brothers, and her heart filled, and she sobbed aloud. Aunt Helen and Lunaria tapped softly at her door. They found her thus; they blessed, they kissed her, they spoke comfortably to her, bathed her face, and smoothed her hair. Her merry brothers came in, and then Reginald, to claim her. His father, who loves her dearly, gives her away. Hundreds waited below! And a calm entered her heart. She found strength when she required it, because she had asked it, and none are denied. Pale as marble, she was noble amidst the nobility; but trusting and happy, she uttered her vows, and was the wife of Reginald Wentworth. Lunaria clasped a magnificent emerald cross in her travelling cloak, and kissed her child, as she drove off to the seat of the Earl of Ormond, to spend the honeymoon. Henry entered the army, and Hubert the navy, each only for a time, till of an age to settle in life, and become useful members of society; and Aunt Helen awaited their leave of absence, and welcomed them to their home, and to her kind heart, Lunaria, too, always came to see her noble boys, and to enjoy a sober-loving chat with Henry, and a romp with Hubert. Lunaria and Veronica returned to labour among the poor, still dear to them.

CHAPTER XIV.

MARRIAGE OF HUBERT—DEATH OF HENRY—BIRTH OF
GRANDCHILDREN VERY DEAR TO OUR HEROINE.

WE could linger with the young Lady Wentworth amidst her greatness and her many trials. How the gay and heartless laughed at her eccentricity, her early hours, her appearing so seldom in public, her devoted fondness for her husband, her respectful attention to her parents, how his elder brother's wife sneered at her. His own brothers could not but admire her lovely consistency; her lofty and independent spirit. Kennedia had much self-reliance, a rare quality in woman. She soon influenced her husband's younger sisters, and the wild little Constance, in a few years, won the heart of Hubert; and, moulded by Kennedia's strength of mind and ardent affectionate nature, she became in character so lovely, so unselfish, so uncontaminated by the heartless atmosphere of a fashionable world, that even Sister Lunaria thought her worthy of her darling Hubert. Henry was too difficult to please; he lived a philanthropist, and died in Lunaria's arms, beloved by all, almost adored by the infant Wentworths and his

sister-in-law, the warm-hearted Conny, who could not comfort the twin-brother.

"Dear Hubert, I am happy," said the young earl; "I join our mother, I care not to live but for all who love me; I have my happy home and my treasure in Heaven. Dear brother, do not grieve for me, I never expected to live long, and Sister Lunaria taught me to die happy."

So saying, he laid his pale, cold cheek on Lunaria's motherly bosom; she kissed her son, and Henry murmured, "Dear Hubert, pray." And all united in prayer, and the happy spirit joined his angelic mother.

Lunaria never recovered this severe blow; her step grew slower, her hair whiter; her children, and her children's children, although still very dear, seemed secondary to the heavenly voices which sounded in her ears, claiming her as one of themselves in their bright and heavenly home.

Hubert, poor fellow, lost his merriness. In his beloved twin-brother he lost a portion of his happiness. He called his first-born "Henry," and earnestly prayed that he might resemble his sainted uncle. Still, God blessed this good family. Henry's death was the means of converting many of the young nobility who had loved and admired Lord Ellerton.

Kennedia had influence, from her superior mind and talents, over many; and her twin-daughters, Helen and Lunaria, were the comfort and darlings

of their namesakes. Her eldest son was all Lord Osmond could wish, a noble boy; and, as Lunaria clasped her grandchildren to her loving bosom, she sadly smiled, and often said, "In answer to your prayers, dear children, I am still here, but for your dear sakes I linger, although many voices call me."

"And me, too!" said noble Aunt Helen, whose heart was withered since her nephew Henry left them.

And now, gentle reader, we must bid adieu to all, and leave many of them wiser and sadder, yet, we hope, better and happier than when we found them.

THE END.

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THE AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

When offering this little compilation to the public, justice, as well as gratitude, requires that I should acknowledge the sources of my information. I have drawn largely on some of Carpenter's valuable works, also on Johnston's "Chemistry of Common Life," Dr. W. Johnson, Combe, Chambers, Mr. Erasmus Wilson, and indeed, from more than I can now remember. I must also acknowledge that I have taken words as well as facts, and quoted literally everything which suited the subject I was on. My only apology for this great liberty is, that my object has been to put my subjects forward in the strongest possible form, and that I felt any remodelling on my part would destroy half the vigour of the text. Besides, physical infirmity rendered the labour impossible. But I drew on rich sources, and my encroachments have taken nothing from their value. My object has been merely to separate simple truths from more abstruse and scientific ones—and this must be my apology, if the extremely rudimental character of the First Part of this little catechism be objected to. I do not aspire to teach the educated, and have only put together what I hoped may interest the unexercised mind, and perhaps lead to further inquiry. In the Second portion of this compilation I have deviated from my original intention, and entered on subjects which may not be considered necessary to those for whom I profess to write. But I hoped, that while giving sufficiently explicit information on the first principles of health, to the humbler classes, I might make my catechism more generally useful, by entering more largely into physiological details, which, though some may consider unsuited to those who are the chief object of my solicitude, might yet remotely serve them, by directing the attention of those who can alone ameliorate their condition, to the plainest sanitary laws. If, however, I have failed in my attempt—and the patronage which I seek is denied me—it is God's will and my unworthiness: and however deep the disappointment, I shall not complain. If my little effort be successful, may it be to God's glory!

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